

WHAT IS DAWN

DAWN is a network of over 250 hospitals that provides data on drug-related emergency department (ED) visits to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). DAWN tracks *all* types of drug-related ED visits, including *adverse reactions to pharmaceuticals, nonmedical use of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications, illegal drug use, suicide attempts, underage alcohol use, and accidental poisonings*. Westat, a research firm based in Rockville, MD, collects the data on behalf of SAMHSA.

DAWN provides a picture of the impact of drug use, misuse and abuse on selected metropolitan areas and across the Nation. DAWN works with local, State, and Federal substance abuse and public health agencies to both meet their data needs and to learn about their priorities.

“We have been using DAWN to track ED visits involving methamphetamine, which appear to be associated with HIV/AIDS cases in our city.”

— San Francisco Epidemiologist

HOW DOES DAWN WORK WITH THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMUNITY

DAWN has been working with local, State, and Federal substance abuse and public health agencies to learn about their priorities and get feedback on DAWN services. These interactions with DAWN users have helped to target DAWN services to better meet user needs.

Organizations involved with DAWN:

1. Receive DAWN publications, including:
 - Annual estimates of drug-related ED visits;
 - Annual profiles of drug-related deaths; and
 - Short reports, published periodically, highlighting special topics.
2. Alert DAWN staff at SAMHSA about new and emerging needs for information.
3. Serve local needs for DAWN surveillance data as authorized users of DAWN *Live!*

WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE

DAWN provides three types of information:

- **Annual, statistical estimates** of drug-related ED visits for the Nation and selected metropolitan areas;
- **Annual profiles of drug-related deaths** in selected metropolitan areas and States; and
- **Real time, de-identified surveillance data** on the drug-related ED visits that have been electronically reported to DAWN.

HOW IS DAWN USED

Annual estimates. Public health agencies can analyze patterns of drug-related emergencies in their metropolitan area, and compare them to patterns in other metropolitan areas and nationally. *DAWN Interim National Estimates* from 2003 show:

- Cocaine was involved in one-fifth of the ED visits related to **drug abuse**;
- About one-third of **adverse reaction** visits involved anti-infectives; and
- **Suicide attempts** primarily involved central nervous system (CNS) agents, mostly pain relievers, and psychotherapeutic agents, including benzodiazepines and antidepressants.

Surveillance. Public health authorities can become designated users of DAWN *Live!*, DAWN's Internet-based query system. With DAWN *Live!*, they can monitor drug-related events in real time to:

- Identify new drugs of concern;
- Confirm recent patterns identified in other metropolitan areas; and
- Run special inquiries on new public health priorities.

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“Since DAWN is continually being updated, I run monthly reports on DAWN *Live!* to keep our service providers informed.”

— *Colorado Information Director*

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF DAWN INFORMATION

In 2007, close to 300 hospitals reported more than 300,000 cases to DAWN. The pie chart below illustrates the mix of cases from the data in DAWN *Live!* The two leading causes of drug-related ED visits were adverse reactions (36%) and illicit and other drug cases (38%).

National and metropolitan area estimates for each year are published on SAMHSA's website.

WHAT IS DAWN *Live!*

DAWN *Live!* is the secure, Internet-based query system that gives access to the data submitted for designated jurisdictions, metropolitan areas, and/or the nation as a whole. Authorized users can use DAWN *Live!* to monitor the drug-related cases seen in their area. All data in the system are de-identified.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO USE DAWN *Live!*

Access is restricted in accordance with Federal laws governing confidentiality of data. Only authorized users from eligible public health agencies may access DAWN *Live!* All users must agree to use the data within the confidentiality rules required by Federal law.

TRY DAWN *Live!*

Visit DAWN's online demonstration site to test drive DAWN *Live!* at <https://demo.dawninfo.net/login.asp>.

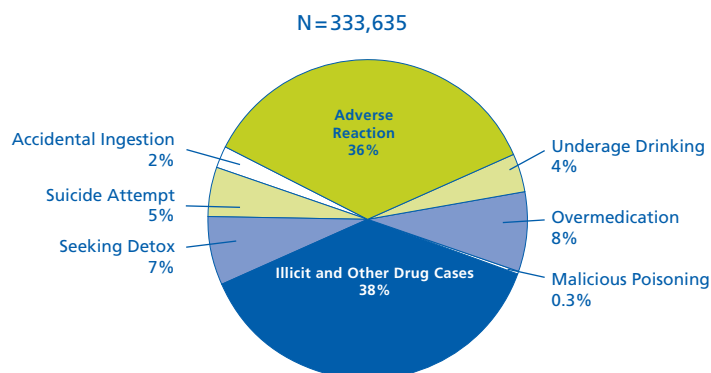
HOW CAN WE GET INVOLVED

You may contact Dr. Elizabeth Crane, DAWN, SAMHSA, at elizabeth.crane@samhsa.hhs.gov

“We are pleased that DAWN can give us metro area data, as well as center city information. We want to intervene early with prevention and treatment services.”

— *Detroit Public Health Practitioner*

DAWN CASE REPORTS — 2007



Source: DAWN *Live!* Case Reports through 12/27/2007

For more information: If you have questions, please call Westat at **800-FYI-DAWN**. Information about DAWN is also available online at <http://DAWNinfo.samhsa.gov>.